

Statement on Senate Action on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation *June 17, 1993*

Today's vote is a victory for the American people and a setback for the special interests. Government will only serve the middle class if Washington works for the national interest and not narrow interests. By breaking the filibuster and overwhelmingly passing campaign finance reform legislation, the Senate has answered the call for change. This legislation's sponsors and supporters deserve our gratitude.

This bill will end the days when candidates could crush their opponents with unanswered spending by setting voluntary spending limits for candidates. It severely limits PAC's and bans

contributions from lobbyists to the lawmakers they contact. It ends the abuses of the "soft money" system. I continue to believe that we should do more to open up the airwaves to candidates. But all in all, this legislation is comprehensive, real reform.

The process of political reform should now move forward quickly. I urge the House of Representatives to enact the strongest possible legislation. Previous Presidents have blocked and even vetoed political reform. I look forward to signing it.

Statement on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 *June 17, 1993*

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been a topic of substantial discussion in recent days. I want to make absolutely clear my full support for the act.

The Voting Rights Act is central to our Nation's efforts to eradicate racial discrimination and secure equal opportunity for all Americans. As I said last month upon signing the motor voter bill, the Voting Rights Act is part of a great tradition of laws that have widened the circle of liberty to encompass more and more of our citizens. This administration remains unwavering in its commitment to effective enforcement of the act and the Nation's other civil rights laws.

The Voting Rights Act was adopted to give reality to the 15th amendment's guarantee of the right to vote, the most basic right of a democracy. When first adopted in 1965, the act responded to long-entrenched barriers that systematically denied voting rights to African-Americans. As more subtle forms of disenfranchisement came to be employed, the Congress, with bipartisan agreement, strengthened and extended the Voting Rights Act in 1982. The Voting Rights Act offers two major protections: It imposes a nationwide prohibition of any electoral process that results in discrimination, and requires that certain specially covered jurisdic-

tions obtain administrative or judicial preclearance before implementing voting changes.

I fully and enthusiastically support Attorney General Janet Reno, and the attorneys of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, in their efforts to enforce vigorously the Voting Rights Act. Where the Voting Rights Act is violated, this administration will continue, as it has in pending Supreme Court litigation in which the Department of Justice has filed briefs, to seek effective relief by applying the full range of remedies available under law, including remedies that have previously been employed by the Department of Justice or approved by the courts. I also look forward to working with Attorney General Reno and Members of Congress to enact legislation, as needed, to clarify and reinforce the protections of the Voting Rights Act.

In 1965, President Johnson hailed the Voting Rights Act as "a triumph for freedom as huge as any victory that has ever been won on any battlefield." Effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act will allow us to continue that triumph. Inclusion of all Americans in the political process is necessary if we are to work together as communities, States, and a nation to address the difficult challenges that confront us all.